

Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Notes

Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting

1:00 pm, Friday, January 13, 2017

Northwest Kansas GMD #4, 1290 W. 4th, Colby, KS

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Sid Metcalf (Chair)	Oberlin, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2019	Yes
Brian Baalman	Menlo, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2017	Yes
Shannon Kenyon	Colby, KS	Groundwater Management	2019	Yes
Gary Fisher	Atwood, KS	Local Government	2017	No
Mike Frakes	Morland, KS	At Large Public 2	2017	No
Jered Johnson	Colby, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2017	No
Ken McCarty	Rexford, KS	Agriculture Industry	2019	No
Mike Schultz	Brewster, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	Yes
Justin Sloan	Colby, KS	Agriculture 2	2017	Yes
Tyson McGreer	Colby, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2017	No
Ian de Waal	Saint Francis, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2019	Yes

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Kelly Stewart	KDA/DWR
Ray Luhman	GMD No. 4
Dave Flemming	Cheyenne County
Richard Rockel	KWO
Dan Wells	KDHE
Ann Miner	Prairie Museum
Tanya Gerstberger	NRCS

- Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman, Sid Metcalf. All present provided self-introductions. A quorum was present, six of the eleven Committee members were present.
- Review and Approval of July and October Meeting Minutes:** Notes from the July and October meetings were reviewed, no issues or modifications were noted as being needed. Shannon Kenyon motioned for approval and Mike Schultz seconded, minutes were approved by vote.
- Water Talk Series Update:** An update was given of the final agenda and details for the February 1, 2017 Water Talk Series that is to be held with the GMD No. 4 annual meeting. Topics to be covered are: irrigation technology, regional goals, Limited Irrigation crop insurance, economics of water conservation, and the NW Technical College Precision Agriculture program.
- Priorities for legislature:** The Committee was asked what items they would like to see highlighted during this year's Legislative Education Session and if any would like to attend and meet with their legislators. Chairman Sid Metcalf will represent the Committee. No additional items were raised by the Committee to be highlighted.

5. **Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force (BRFTF) Update:** The Committee was provided the latest proposal from the BRFTF, which included proposed projects and information on the 0.5% sales tax proposal. Mike Schultz asked why there was no irrigation use fee being proposed, discussion was had amongst the group and it was noted that an irrigation fee was discussed by the BRFTF but was not chosen.
6. **Northwest Kansas Water Technology Farms:** Currently appears to be funding for four NW Kansas Tech Farms, with Northwest Kansas Groundwater Conservation Foundation support for soil moisture probes and state Water Plan funds for additional items. A grant application was submitted to the Dane G. Hansen Foundation which requested funding to complete 10-15, no decision has been received as of this date.
6. **GMD No. 4 Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) Update:** An update was given on the development of the district-wide LEMA and the series of public informational meetings that were held. Shannon Kenyon stated that people are viewing it as something that needs to be done and that a draft request would be sent to the Division of Water Resources soon. Mike Schultz stated that folks he has spoken with are receptive to the plan and hasn't heard much negativity towards the plan.

The Sheridan 6 LEMA advisory board voted to renew the SD6 LEMA for another five years. The advisory board voted to allow up to five acre-inches to be carried over to the new LEMA period, to allow those that did not exhaust or conserved some of their current LEMA allocation to use the water in the future if needed. The SD6 advisory board will request the same LEMA structure and requirements for the renewal.

The question was brought up of if LEMA allocations from the district-wide LEMA would be able to roll over, Ray Luhman said he thought the large allocations given to some water rights may prevent roll over in it, but that the LEMA advisory panel may allow/discuss rollovers prior to renewing the LEMA.

Shannon Kenyon gave an update on the LEMA public meetings that were held. Said that folks were more positive than in the spring meetings, that they could see their concerns were considered and modifications were made to the LEMA plan based on concerns that were heard. Ian de Waal said it seemed people were more accepting of this LEMA plan.

7. **Division of Water Resources update on proposed statute changes and Water Conservation Areas:** Kelly Stewart provided an update on proposed changes to the Water Conservation Area and impairment statutes. Gave some information on impairment and that have avoided impairment claims so far in Northwest Kansas, but are some areas where they could happen at current declines.
8. **Public Input:** Cheyenne County Noxious Weed Removal – Dave Flemming from Cheyenne County shared information with the Committee on the ongoing project to remove tamarisk and Russian olive plants from land within ½ mile from the banks of the South Fork Republican River, in a continued effort to increase streamflows in the Republican River. Mr. Flemming stated that the project is a 75/25% split for funding, with the landowner providing 25% and that his group was looking for funds to further support their project.

Water Ways Smithsonian Exhibit at Prairie Museum of Art and History – Ann Minor from the Prairie Museum of Art and History provided the Committee and update on the Water Ways exhibit that will be held at the museum in Colby August 12- September 24. That the museum is making their own water exhibit and wants to document the water story for the area. The museum is looking to have the traveling exhibit and is working with college and other local groups

to coordinate. Mrs. Minor stated the museum would like assistance with the grand opening, exhibits, and presentations.

8. Future Meetings:

- a. Kansas Water Authority: May 17-18, Garden City, KS
- b. Upper Republican RAC: TBD April 2017 (Poll will be sent out)